MANAGING CHANGE FOR
DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION

1. Key Takeaways

In the evolving landscape of institutional change, digital transformation stands as both a necessity and a challenge. While it promises to unlock new opportunities and enhance competitive advantage, the journey is laden with resistance, misalignment, and the need for holistic change management. A recent discussion in the Digii100 Summit 2024 on Managing Change for Digital Transformation provided key insights into overcoming these challenges.

Key insights from the session include:

- **A clear and compelling vision is critical**
  Successful transformations begin with alignment across stakeholders on the purpose, scope, and outcomes

- **Comprehensive stakeholder involvement**
  Decisions made in isolation lead to resistance during implementation

- **Technology is an enabler, not a replacement**
  Technology should amplify human capabilities rather than replace them

- **Leadership commitment and agility**
  Digital transformation often falters due to the gap between leadership aspirations and execution. Leaders must be actively involved, empowering teams and avoiding rigid goals that can paralyze progress

The discussions highlighted critical frameworks essential for driving successful and lasting change:

- **The Control Tower©** for governance, oversight and alignment

- **Communication engineering©** for transparency and collaboration

- **The Decision-Making Protocol©** for agility and stakeholder-driven decisions

- **Reward and recognition system©** to drive digital adoption (not extensively discussed in the session)

- **L&D framework©** to ensure digital readiness (not extensively discussed in the session)

Success requires collaborative ecosystems, leadership that empowers, systems that adapt, and a steadfast commitment to human-led innovation. By addressing resistance, fostering comprehensive involvement, and ensuring flexibility, institutions can transform challenges into opportunities for growth.

The following sections outline key takeaways from the session. The objective was to leverage the frameworks to spark discussions and gather insights from the experience of visionary leaders across higher education institutions. Based on the rich discussion, the frameworks have been further enhanced to make them more suitable to tackle the challenges faced in digital transformation across institutions.

2. Knowledge Experts

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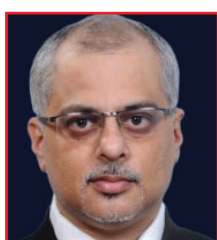
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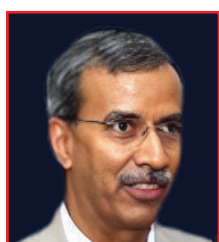Chief Operating Officer, Knimbus

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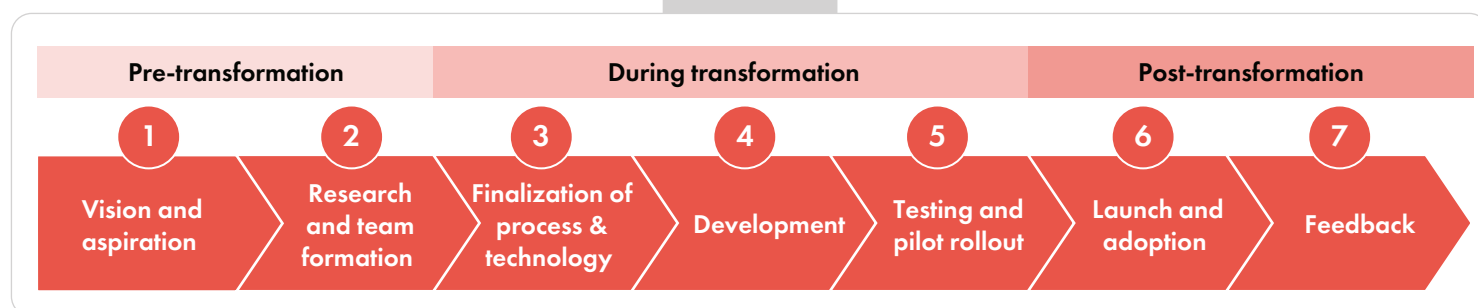# 3. Session highlights: What we discussed

3.1. Introduction

For educational institutions, digital transformation presents both opportunities and challenges. While it can enhance competitiveness and create new possibilities, it also requires navigating significant stakeholder shifts. A successful transformation requires a holistic approach that considers the complexities of change management across people, processes, and technology.

Amidst all, it was unanimously agreed that the student must remain at the center of the transformation. As one participant emphasized, digital transformation should ultimately enable students to "better decide what is right for them" – transforming institutions into enablers of personal learning journeys.

3.2. Steps in digital transformation

The process is divided into three phases: Pre-Transformation, During Transformation, and Post-Transformation, further broken down into seven key steps. These steps cover the journey from defining a vision and forming the right team to selecting technology, development, testing, implementation, and continuous feedback. Each step presents unique challenges that institutions must navigate to ensure a successful transformation.

Exhibit 1

Pre-transformation		During transformation			Post-transformation	
1 Vision and aspiration	**2** Research and team formation	**3** Finalization of process & technology	**4** Development	**5** Testing and pilot rollout	**6** Launch and adoption	**7** Feedback

In the pre-transformation phase, the first critical step, also discussed in detail, is establishing a clear and compelling vision for the digital transformation. Participants emphasized the importance of aligning various stakeholders on the purpose, scope, and desired outcomes of the initiative.

A clear and compelling vision is the foundation of digital transformation. The discussion also emphasized that aligning stakeholders on the purpose, scope, and desired outcomes is essential for success.

Financing and budgeting were also acknowledged as important components to be taken into consideration right at the onset. It was noted that inadequate budgeting can become a significant impediment, potentially stalling transformation efforts.

Equally crucial is selecting the right cross-functional team (CFT) with relevant and diverse expertise to drive the transformation forward.

3.3 Change management challenges

We map key challenges into broad themes, identifying common barriers institutions face during digital transformation. Corresponding resolution strategies provide a practical framework for addressing these challenges.

During our discussion, four key pointers were brought up:

- A recurring concern raised was the insecurity felt by employees, fearing that technology would "replace us". This psychological resistance often manifests as deliberate highlighting of failures or the argument that "manual work is still better".
- Communication and collaboration emerged as critical battlegrounds. Traditional top-down approaches are known to fail, and transformation often becomes "a majority decision" where stakeholder groups reject changes only after they've been fully implemented. The solution lies in actively involving stakeholders throughout the transformation process to prevent last-minute challenges.

- Agility is key. Vision and objectives must be measurable but adaptable. Being too rigid can lead to teams "chasing something which they know is not possible," creating institutional paralysis.

- Leadership commitment often falls short of rhetoric. Leaders say they want "to be the best in the industry" and use "the best digital technology," yet their level of involvement in implementation varies. The gap between aspiration and execution is where many transformation efforts falter.

> "
> *Trust in your people - they can achieve what you envision. Believing in their potential is key to driving sucessful transformation.*
> "

Ranganathan Sourirajan
COO, Management Development Institute, Gurgaon
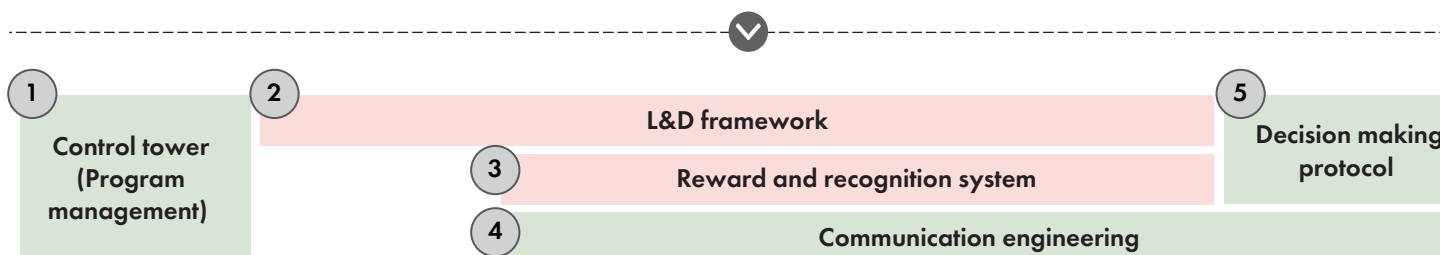
Stills from the session

Change management themes and challenges

Exhibit 2

Five key resolution strategies to address change management challenges

A Execution oversight	B Digital novice	C Change aversion	D Sense of disregard	E Tunnel vision	F Collaboration issues
Impact measurement challenges	Skill gaps	Comfort zone challenges	Loss of control	Petty issues overwhelming vision	Internal politics
Implementation transparency		Complacency	Lack of inputs	Accountability issues	Collaboration gaps
Absence of comprehensive testing		Mindset shift	Exclusion from vision		Conflicts of interest
Unclear stakeholder mapping		Lack of conviction	Fear of redundancy		Process alignment
Lack of feedback mechanisms		Lack of urgency			
		Lack of ownership			
		Increased scrutiny			

Strategies for resolution

1. Control tower (Program management)
2. L&D framework
3. Reward and recognition system
4. Communication engineering
5. Decision making protocol

3.4 The Role of Technology Partners

Technology providers aren't off the hook either. Many try to force institutions to adapt to their systems, rather than tailoring solutions to specific institutional needs. Service providers often "try to change us rather than change their software," creating friction and resistance.

The consensus lies somewhere in the middle - while some level of standardization is necessary, institutions should adopt best practices from the industry without discarding processes that are already yielding strong results. Technology providers are "creating a framework for the future" – trying to introduce best practices that might seem challenging now but could be transformative in the long term.

4. Resolution strategies to address key challenges

Following the discussion on challenges, three critical frameworks were discussed: **The Control Tower, Communication Engineering,** and **The Decision-Making Protocol.** Each was discussed extensively, with common underlying principles being active stakeholder involvement, agility, rigorous testing, and a clearly defined vision to guide the transformation effort.
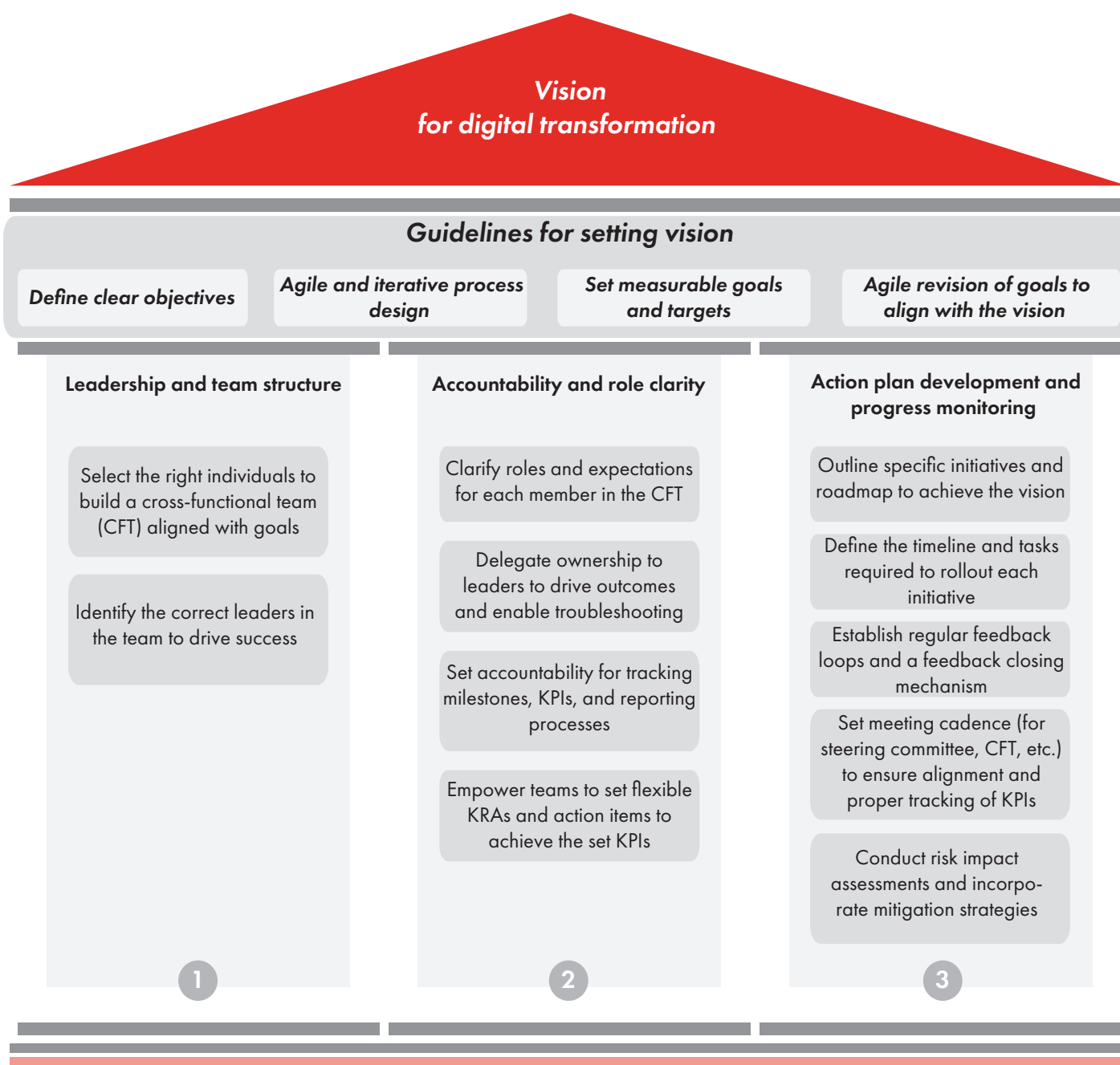
4.1 Control tower to ensure proper vision setting

The control tower framework serves as the backbone of digital transformation by aligning vision with actionable goals. It focuses on three pillars:

- **Leadership and Team Structure:** Build a capable cross-functional team and identify strong leaders to drive success

- **Accountability and Role Clarity:** Define clear roles, assign ownership, and set measurable KPIs to ensure progress

- **Action Plan Development and Monitoring:** Establish roadmaps, timelines, feedback loops, and risk management to track and achieve milestones effectively

Exhibit 3

Control tower: Backbone of the digital transformation process to ensure that vision is turned into reality!

*Vision
for digital transformation*

Guidelines for setting vision

| Define clear objectives | Agile and iterative process design | Set measurable goals and targets | Agile revision of goals to align with the vision |

Leadership and team structure

- Select the right individuals to build a cross-functional team (CFT) aligned with goals

- Identify the correct leaders in the team to drive success

1

Accountability and role clarity

- Clarify roles and expectations for each member in the CFT

- Delegate ownership to leaders to drive outcomes and enable troubleshooting

- Set accountability for tracking milestones, KPIs, and reporting processes

- Empower teams to set flexible KRAs and action items to achieve the set KPIs

2

Action plan development and progress monitoring

- Outline specific initiatives and roadmap to achieve the vision

- Define the timeline and tasks required to rollout each initiative

- Establish regular feedback loops and a feedback closing mechanism

- Set meeting cadence (for steering committee, CFT, etc.) to ensure alignment and proper tracking of KPIs

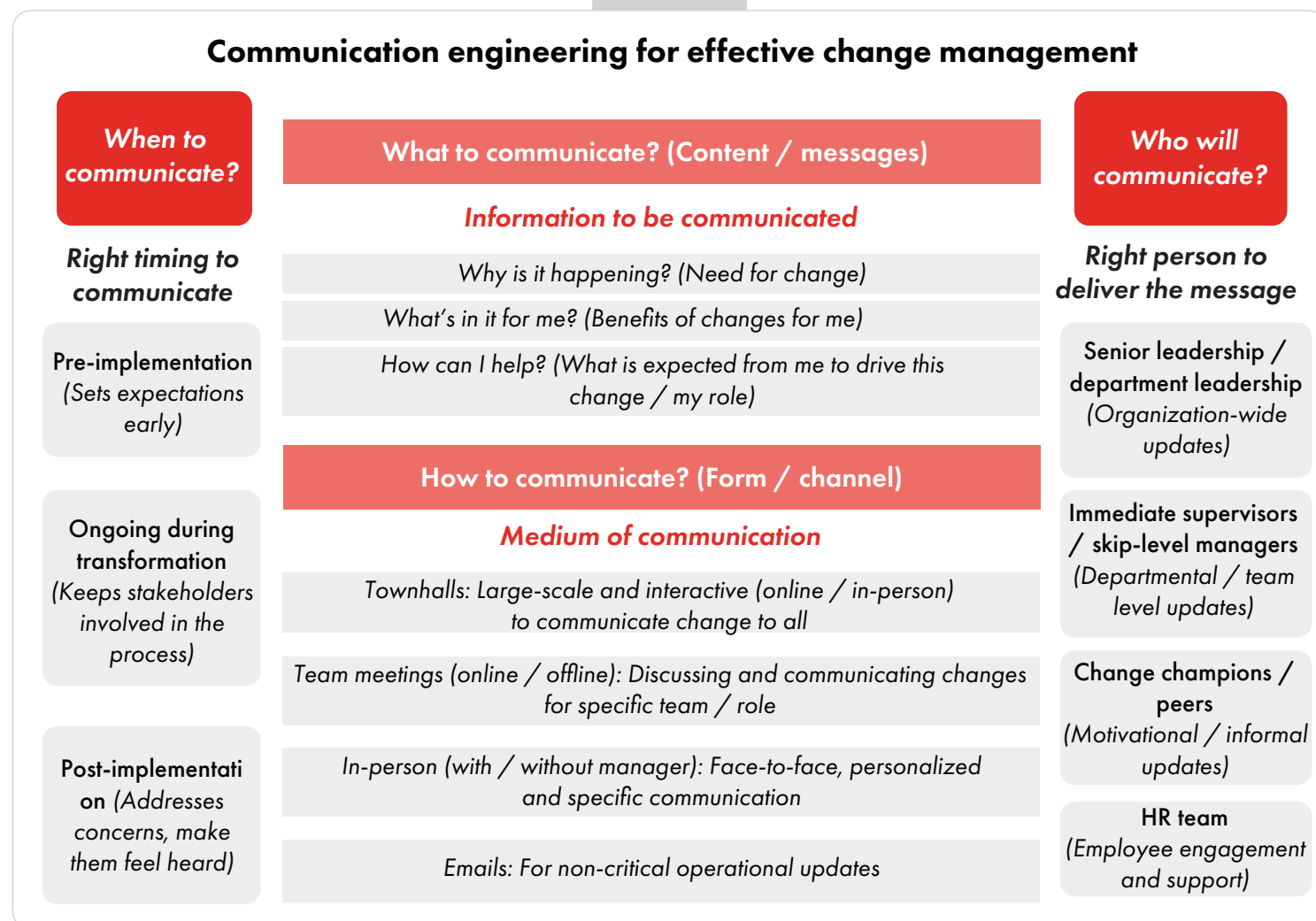- Conduct risk impact assessments and incorporate mitigation strategies

3

4.2 Communication engineering for effective change management

The communication framework ensures effective stakeholder engagement by addressing *when, what, how, and who* in change management:

- **When to Communicate?** Identifying the right timing for communication
- **What to Communicate?** Defining the right information to be conveyed across stages of communication and transformation
- **How to Communicate?** Selecting the appropriate communication channels best suited for the context
- **Who will Communicate?** Choosing the right messenger based on content and communication channel

Exhibit 4

Communication engineering for effective change management

When to communicate?	What to communicate? (Content / messages)	Who will communicate?
Right timing to communicate	**Information to be communicated**	**Right person to deliver the message**
Pre-implementation *(Sets expectations early)*	*Why is it happening? (Need for change)*	Senior leadership / department leadership *(Organization-wide updates)*
	What's in it for me? (Benefits of changes for me)	
	How can I help? (What is expected from me to drive this change / my role)	
Ongoing during transformation *(Keeps stakeholders involved in the process)*	**How to communicate? (Form / channel)**	Immediate supervisors / skip-level managers *(Departmental / team level updates)*
	Medium of communication	
	Townhalls: Large-scale and interactive (online / in-person) to communicate change to all	Change champions / peers *(Motivational / informal updates)*
	Team meetings (online / offline): Discussing and communicating changes for specific team / role	
Post-implementation *(Addresses concerns, make them feel heard)*	*In-person (with / without manager): Face-to-face, personalized and specific communication*	HR team *(Employee engagement and support)*
	Emails: For non-critical operational updates	

4.3 Decision-making protocol to guide transformation

The decision-making protocol offers a framework with five key guiding questions to facilitate effective decision-making, particularly when stakeholder consensus cannot be achieved. These questions help ensure decisions are strategically aligned, operationally efficient, and mindful of stakeholder impact. These questions also provide a succinct brief to many alignment issues arising through the transformation as pointed out by participants.

Exhibit 5

Key guiding questions

Does the process change align with the overall vision and strategic goals?	Does it enhance efficiency, speed, or effectiveness in achieving objectives?	Can it be implemented within the given time and cost constraints?	Is this approach aligned with industry best practices, or does it challenge norms in a strategic way?	Have we heard the primary stakeholders and users most impacted by this process?
1	2	3	4	5

5. Closing remarks

Digital transformation is not a destination but an ongoing journey of adaptation, collaboration, and innovation. Success hinges on the alignment of vision, comprehensive stakeholder involvement, and leveraging technology to empower humans rather than replace them.

> " *Higher Education recognizes that the way we work today will not be the same in the future. To prepare for this we need to think very differently.* "

- Martin Newton, Managing Director, CoSector

The five frameworks, including the three discussed in detail - **The Control Tower, Communication Engineering,** and **Decision-Making Protocol** - along with the Reward and Recognition System and L&D Framework, serve as essential tools that one can deploy to effectively address key challenges, drive digital adoption, and ensure organization readiness.

True transformation is achieved through leadership that empowers, systems that adapt, and a commitment to continuous learning. By fostering collaboration, embracing agility, and prioritizing people enabled with technology, education institutions can turn the complexities of change into opportunities for sustainable growth and competitive advantage by delivering superior learner outcomes.

About Praxis Global Alliance

Praxis Global Alliance is a leading management consulting and advisory firm that brings deep industry expertise and data-driven insights, enhancing the strategic value of its initiatives. A next-generation firm working across diverse markets and verticals with a practical, research-oriented approach, we partner with some of the largest companies, preparing them for change and innovation by solving their most complex problems. By combining expert industry knowledge, innovative AI-led research methodologies, and digital technologies, we provide practical solutions to tackle the most complex business challenges.

How we help our Education & Employability clients Grow!

GrowRevenue

GTM strategy & product propositions

- Customer segmentation & value proposition design
- Design product offerings (curriculum, pedagogy, tech offering) to meet learner demand
- International market expansion & GTM

Micro-market full potential

- Identification & assessment of location for learner demand & attractiveness
- Growth planning & aspiration setting for the center

Franchise expansion strategy

- Channel productivity optimization & omnichannel expansion
- Design comprehensive training & development processes for sales team
- Sales funnel improvement – lead generation, conversion boost

GrowValue

Strategic roadmap

- Long-term (5-10 years) vision setting
- In-organic roadmap and brand acquisition strategy

IPO & fundraising

- IPO support
- VDD

M&A and due diligence

- CDD, ODD, ESG DD
- PMI

GrowPerformance

Technology augmentation

Improve learner outcomes via digitization:

- Digitization of processes (CRM, process automation)
- Digital enablement of classrooms to improve learner outcome via EdTech / digital offering suite
- AI-driven personalization for learner segments
- Learner digital journey optimization
- Platform gamification
- Post-course engagement and LTV maximization

Playbook creation

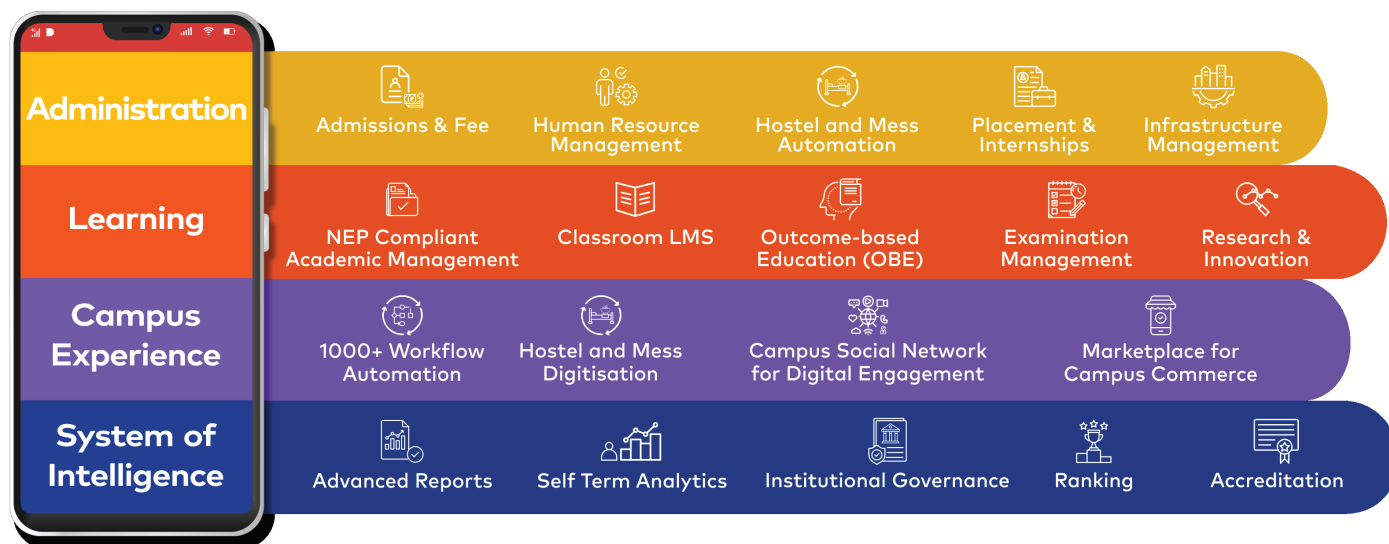Playbook creation for franchise expansion & micro-market demand generation

← We undertake end-to-end execution & implementation of projects →

About Digii

Digii is an enterprise software company providing Digiicampus — a Digital Operating System designed for modern institutions. It empowers academic, administrative, and campus operations through intelligent, end-to-end digital transformation.

Digiicampus is trusted by over 200 leading higher educational institutions, including the National Law School of India University, IIT Madras, Manipal Academy, VIT, MICA Ahmedabad, Jio Institute, BITS School of Management (BITSoM), among others.

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- Examination Management
- Research & Innovation

Campus Experience
- 1000+ Workflow Automation
- Hostel and Mess Digitisation
- Campus Social Network for Digital Engagement
- Marketplace for Campus Commerce

System of Intelligence
- Advanced Reports
- Self Term Analytics
- Institutional Governance
- Ranking
- Accreditation

Connect with us

We will be happy to share perspectives

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